

# Chun Chan Is A Long Way From Home

By Jocelyn Kennedy

After a 30 hour plane trip from Hong Kong in late August, Chun Chan arrived in New York City and promptly exclaimed, "It's quieter and much prettier than I expected!"

Now a senior at CHS, Chun Chan is living on South Main St. with Mr. and Mrs. Prouty. With only three years of formal training in English, one would think that the change from the musical, flowing native Chinese to English might be very difficult. However, Chun communicates as easily as any native American. And her understanding? Even better!

An extremely intelligent 17 years old, Chun is receiving A's in all of her courses. First term she ranked number one in the class and joined those on the High Honor Roll.

An only child, Chun was born in Peking, China, and after 15 years moved to Hong Kong. Since China is a Communist country, Chun's parents, Che Kin Chan and Kam Sin Man-Chan, had to apply for a permit to leave the country. After two years of anxious waiting, they were granted permission to care for her ailing grandfather in the British Crown Colony of Hong Kong.

Although she had no knowledge of English, Chun discovered that she had to take all of her classes in the all-girl school in English. She explains that in Hong Kong her classes are much more intense. Her social studies course included public affairs, economy, Chinese History and Western History. She also took physics, chemistry, biology, algebra, English and Chinese. And each class met three times a week. Here at CHS, Chun expresses a great love for biology, her favorite class.

While the Chans were still in China, the country was experiencing a cultural revolution. Many people were protesting difficult living conditions, the economy. Chun explains that in China there are no private enterprises. Everything is owned and run by the government. One of the Communist leaders, Teng Tiao Peng, is visiting here in the U.S. at the end of January.

Along with adjusting to a much smaller school in Hong Kong, Chun discovered that she could not choose her own classes. Each grade was divided into small groups which attended all of their classes together.

One method of transportation was a real surprise to Chun when she arrived in New York. "I rode one of those things that go underground — what do you call it? Subway. The people were so expressionless as they stood waiting."

Asked about national holidays, Chun said, "We have a Chinese New Year." In Hong Kong the New Year celebration arrives sometime in January or February, according to the movement of the moon. Also, unlike our Western calendar, the Chinese reckon time according to the moon's movements,

with the 15th each month designated a "full moon night." On each of these occasions the family reunites and shares the day together. Each August 15 — mid-autumn — there is a big festival. Lobster and cakes are the traditional foods eaten at this time.

Although Chun's visa card is good for only one year, she has decided to stay and apply for a renewal in order to attend college here. So far she has filled out applications for Harvard, Wesleyan, Brown and Yale. And, in a low voice accompanied by a barely noticeable grin, she adds, "I would very much like to go to Harvard."

About the Americans she has met and her current teachers, Chun said, "In China, the teachers don't associate with the students. It is very difficult to earn an A grade because tests always include questions designed especially to trip you up.

## A Straight A Student At CHS

There is no Honor or High Honor Roll either."

And what of our teachers here at CHS? "They are friendly, and so willing to help."

Chun is surprised at the variety of ethnic groups in the U.S. "In Hong Kong there are mainly British and Chinese." And

she concluded, "It really is pretty here, not at all like the scenes in the U.S. detective movies that are shown in Hong Kong."

Just before the interview ended, I asked Chun to write something in Chinese. Without hesitation, she drew out a line of

characters standing for "I see the building." It really is amazing that in only three years Chun learned a whole new alphabet and a totally new way of communicating. She is much to be admired both for her remarkably quick learning and her friendliness towards others. A very pretty girl, Chun Chan is one of a kind, and her presence definitely adds a great deal to CHS.

## Recreation

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organizations, and individuals who have helped us towards the realization of this project.

The Recreation Commission consists of seven members; Richard P. Barrow, Chairman; Nancy E. Sladen, Vice Chairman; Irene E. Brown, Secretary; Richard D. Ainslie; Eugene K. Price; Ernest J. Sullivan; and Hamilton T.

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The Recreation Department utilizes many facilities for programs. Special thanks should go to Dr. John F. Maloney, Superintendent of Schools, and Mr. John M. Raftery, Business Agent, and

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